

PRESS RELEASE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JANUARY 15, 2010

Media Contact:

Kit Werbe
Public Information Officer
Indianapolis Department of Public Works
Office: (317) 327-4669



sustainindy

RECORD NUMBER OF STORM WATER PROBLEMS ADDRESSED IN 2009

City to continue aggressive drainage improvement work in 2010

INDIANAPOLIS – Across Indianapolis, 2009 brought heavy spring and autumn rains. As the city logged more than 2,100 drainage-related complaints from residents, the Indianapolis Department of Public Works (DPW) made substantial progress in solving many of the city's storm water challenges.

“DPW worked tirelessly in 2009 to help alleviate standing water, flooding and other drainage problems for the residents of Marion County,” said Mayor Greg Ballard. “Resolving storm water issues is important because standing water can cause dangerous driving conditions and can contribute to basement backups and mosquito breeding.”

In 2009, DPW addressed more storm water-related problems than in any previous year. DPW's work included:

- Cleaning 401 catch basins
- Cleaning 11,174 grate tops
- Cleaning 1,948 inlets
- Cleaning 8,192 storm manholes
- Cleaning and/or reshaping 12,870 feet of drainage ditches
- Placing 47,216 feet of new drainage ditches
- Completing 579 storm water channel inspections
- Mowing 2,515 acres of levees
- Spraying 982,996 square feet of brush clogged detention areas
- Removing 701 tons of debris from waterways

In all, nearly 48,000 lineal feet of drainage pipe was constructed in 2009, with another 110,000 lineal feet of pipe in design or planning. Neighborhoods across Indianapolis are benefitting from the \$13.4 million dollar investment in storm water infrastructure, including seven drainage improvement projects undertaken in 2009. Those neighborhoods include: Mars Hill, 17th Street and Livingston Avenue, Kessler Boulevard, Downtown Wanamaker, 59th Street and Lieber Road, and Northern Estates. In addition, storm water projects were also included in some of the city's other sanitary sewer and road paving projects.

In 2010, residents can expect to see an even greater emphasis on innovative methods of improving drainage in the county.

(more)

Record number of storm water problems addressed/Add 1

“DPW and the Office of Sustainability are working together toward more sustainable and cost effective means for alleviating the city’s storm water problems,” said DPW Director David Sherman. “We already completed the Fall Creek/College Avenue Pilot Project and there are several other green infrastructure projects on the drawing board that will be implemented this year.”

In addition, residents are reminded that drainage infrastructure located on private property must be maintained by the property owner, according to Sections 431-506 and 561-211 of the Revised Code of the City and County (visit www.municode.com for more information).

Home and business owners should:

- Maintain swales and ditches, including roadside ditches, by mowing to eight inches or less and keeping them free of fill and other debris.
- Work with neighbors to clear brush, debris and other blockages from neighborhood creeks and ditches.
- Use approved rock or concrete for erosion control for creeks that run through private property. Check with the city’s Department of Code Enforcement (327-8700) to ensure the specific type of rock or concrete is permissible in waterways.
- Keep storm inlet grates clear of debris, trash and leaves.
- Make sure driveway culverts are free of debris, in good repair and set to proper elevation so that water does not back up.
- Call 327-4MAC (4622) to report illegal dumping in waterways.

Drainage complaints should be called into the Mayor’s Action Center at 327-4MAC (4622). Drainage complaints are then prioritized to address the worst problems first using limited funds available through a dedicated storm water utility fund set up in 2001.

Mayor Ballard launched SustainIndy and created the Office of Sustainability in October of 2008. Both represent an innovative enterprise aimed at delivering long-term cost savings to the city, building the local economy, improving our quality of life and enhancing our environmental and public health. Its efforts are designed to aggressively move Indianapolis forward in making it one of the most sustainable cities in the Midwest. For more information, visit www.sustainindy.org.

###